



Skin self checks: Dermatologists recommend doing it with a partner

Regular skin self-examination is crucial in the early detection of melanoma, and Australians who carry out regular skin checks with the help of their partner are more likely to find skin cancers, delegates to the Australasian College of Dermatologists' 42nd Annual Scientific Meeting have heard.

Professor of Clinical Dermatology at Northwestern University, Chicago, and one of the world's leading experts in skin cancer, Professor June Robinson, addressed the meeting on the Gold Coast and presented research highlighting the important role of skin self-examination, in conjunction with regular surveillance by a dermatologist, for those who are at high risk of developing melanoma.

Professor Robinson says that studies show between 20 and 30% of all melanoma lesions are initially detected by the patient's spouse, compared to about 50% detected by the individual themselves and 25% by a doctor.

Professor Robinson indicated that partners play a very important role in the health motivation of their spouse.

Australasian College of Dermatologists Honorary Secretary Dr Stephen Shumack says that anyone at risk of developing melanoma should be sure to have skin self-examination as part of their regular at-home health routine.

"A dermatologist or GP can instruct their patient and their partner how to do an effective skin examination at home, and how to keep track of potentially suspicious moles," says Dr. Shumack.

"All Australians need to be vigilant about watching for new or changing skin lesions but in particular, older men are a group that would benefit greatly from doing a skin self-examination with their partner once every few months."

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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